

source of his information, but it is clear * that he was acquainted with the fact that *Potamobius* was preoccupied before 1819, when Samouelle, basing himself on Leach's MSS., proposed to apply that term to *Astacus fluviatilis*.

To draw the conclusions that flow from these facts:—

First, as a matter of accuracy in dates and names: on p. 202 of Mr. Stebbing's work already referred to, "*Nephrops*, Leach, 1819," should have the date corrected to 1814; "*Astacus*, Leach, 1814," on the same page, should be altered to—well, it is hard to say; Leach's *Astacus* of 1814 is the *Astacus* of Gronovius (1764) as emended by Fabricius and others, and by Leach's removal of *A. norvegicus*. "*Potamobia*, Leach, 1819" (p. 207), should read *Potamobius*, Samouelle, 1819 [preocc. by Leach].

Secondly, till the appearance of the second vol. of Milne-Edwards's great work in 1837 zoologists at large were content to accept as accurate the words of Desmarest in 1823 †:—"dans l'état actuel de la science, le genre *Ecrevisse* [*Astacus*] se trouve renfermer des espèces d'eau douce et des espèces marines dont le nombre ne s'élève pas à plus de six."

All, then, that the most pious priority-purist could ask is that, in the year 1896, some one should invent a name to replace Samouelle's preoccupied term *Potamobius*, given by him in 1819 to the crayfish, and, as a reward for doing so, he promises only that the inventor will throw into confusion not only carcinological literature, but every text-book in every language under the sun.

I have taken a great deal of trouble with this case, and I have a suspicion that if a few more would be equally "eingehende" we might speedily give the purists the short shrift I have often wished them.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE.

Artistic and Scientific Taxidermy and Modelling.

By MONTAGU BROWNE, F.G.S. &c. London, 1896.

SOME years ago Mr. Browne published a very useful little work called 'Practical Taxidermy,' and we have now before us a much more complete and carefully compiled work on the same topic, which goes more fully into the subject. Mr. Browne enters in some detail into the origin and process of the art from the earliest ages unto the present time, from which we gather that, though the Egyptians preserved various kinds of animals by embalming them, yet the actual stuffing of specimens for museum purposes does not date back more than about three hundred years; but even within

* P. Z. S. 1878, p. 752.

† *Tom. cit.* p. 307.

the present century stuffed specimens in most museums were far from resembling the living animals, and it is only somewhat recently that care has been taken to copy nature as closely as possible.

We are glad to see that Mr. Browne gives the late Mr. E. T. Booth, of Brighton, the credit which is due to him of being the first to start a museum in which the birds were mounted surrounded by accessories closely copied from nature—an example that has been followed not only by the Natural History Museum at South Kensington, but by many other provincial museums in England and also abroad.

A full list of instruments he considers necessary is given, together with illustrations; but a first-class workman would, we think, be able to dispense with several of those named, and, as far as skins of birds are concerned, we have seen first-class specimens which have been made with no tools beyond a pocket-knife and a pair of stout nail-scissors. A useful chapter follows on preservatives, from which we observe that he objects to arsenical paste, which, he contends, does not protect the specimens from the larvæ of moths or beetles; and he recommends in its place a non-poisonous preservative soap consisting of chalk, soap, lime, and musk. Concise and careful directions are given of how to prepare skins and to mount specimens, and, as regards bird-skins, we have found Mr. Maynard's plan of wrapping a freshly prepared skin in a layer of cotton wadding to be the best mode, especially when the skins have to be packed at once. Full directions are also given for the modelling of rocks, trees, &c.; and respecting this we may say that we have found light peat most useful in the reproduction of rock-work, and have been able to make a very close copy of a natural piece of rock with it.

At the end of the book a carefully compiled bibliography of the works on the subject is given, and we are glad to see that Mr. Browne has made judicious use of most of them, especially those published in the United States, in the body of the work.

Mr. Browne is evidently a first-class taxidermist and well able to write with authority on the subject; and we can safely recommend the work to any one interested in the preparation of specimens. Some very good illustrations are scattered through the work, twenty-two of which are printed separately and eleven are printed in the text.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Evolution of Lithocystis Schneideri, a Parasite of Echinocardium cordatum. By M. LOUIS LEGER.

I HAD recently the opportunity of collecting, on the beach at Wimereux, a considerable number of *Echinocardia*, all of which contained *Lithocystis Schneideri*. I availed myself of it to study the evolution of this singular parasite, concerning which opinions are so divided, some regarding it as a Myxomycete, others as a pure